

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Safeguard Your Home

- Women, please do not list your first name in the telephone book. Instead use initials.
- Make sure your answering machine message does not indicate that you are alone.
- Have deadbolts installed on all doors. Keep doors and windows locked.
- Install a peep-hole on your door and look before opening the door.
- Never open the door to strangers.
- Keep blinds or drapes closed at night to discourage "Peeping Toms." Do not hang lingerie outdoors.
- Verify the identity of any repairmen. Use the telephone number listed in the phone book, not on their identification.
- If someone comes to your door asking to use the telephone, make the call yourself. Don't invite them in.
- Don't hide a spare key under the door mat or under a flower pot. Thieves know all the good hiding places.
- Plant thorny bushes under all windows. Invest in motion sensor lights and a good security system.
- Get a barking dog or "beware of dog" signs.
- Always double check doors at night and lock all windows.
- Be sure your garage door can be secured. Do not leave it open when you are away.

Safeguard Your Home While on Vacation

- Strive to make your home look as lived-in as possible while you're away.
- Don't broadcast your plans but do let your neighbors and local law enforcement know.
- Give a spare key to your neighbors and give them an emergency telephone number to reach you.
- Arrange to have your mail and newspapers picked up daily.
- Have someone mow your yard or rake the leaves so your house looks lived-in.
- Use automatic timers to turn on a radio and lights at different intervals to hide the fact you aren't home.
- Turn down the ringer on the telephone. An unanswered telephone is a dead give-away.
- Be sure you don't announce your absence on your answering machine message.
- Leave your blinds like you normally would if you were home. Only close them all the way if that is what you would normally do.
- Be sure to close and lock the garage as well as any storage sheds, gates, etc.
- Engrave all your valuables with your driver's license number. If possible videotape the contents of your home. Be sure to keep the video and the list of valuables in a safety deposit box.
- Ask your neighbor to occasionally park in your driveway. If you are leaving a vehicle parked outside, have the neighbor move it periodically so it looks as though you are home.
- Be sure someone knows your itinerary and your estimated time of arrival and return.
- If you get lost while traveling, ask directions of local law enforcement, not complete strangers.
- Be sure your vehicle is in good working condition and that you have taken enough money. **Do not carry large amounts of cash, use credit cards and travelers' checks.**

Prevent a Business Burglary

- Install lighting at the front and back as well as near any side doors of your business. Try to eliminate as many shadows as possible.
- Use only solid core doors. Be sure the door frames cannot easily be jimmied. Hinges should be located on the inside so that pin cannot be removed.
- Use deadbolts and be sure to change the locks every time an employee with access to them leaves.
- Install burglar-resistant glass or use wire mesh or iron bars over all glass.
- Arrange merchandise so that a passerby can see into the store. Keep your expensive merchandise away from the windows, toward the center of the store.
- Keep front windows free from posters, etc., which can prevent a burglar inside from being seen by a passerby.
- Install and use a drop safe. Limit the amount of cash in the register and post signs indicating that a drop safe is used and register only has limited cash.
- Check ventilation system to ensure it can not be used to gain entry.

Prevent a Carjacking

- Keep doors locked and windows shut.
- Don't stop to assist a disabled motorist. Instead contact a service station or police.
- When stopped at a light, leave enough room between you and the car in front that you could make an escape.
- Be suspicious of anyone approaching the car with fliers, asking for change or directions. Be ready to leave carefully, even if it means running a red light or stop sign.
- While driving, if struck from behind or in any suspicious way, stay in your vehicle with the doors locked and windows closed until the police arrive. Activate your vehicle's emergency flashers.
- If you're very suspicious, get the other vehicle's license number and drive to the nearest police station or a well-lighted area with lots of people.
- If you think you are being followed, drive immediately to an area with lots of lights and people. If possible, drive to the nearest law enforcement office.
- Obtain and use a cellular phone to call for help

Prevent Motor Vehicle Theft

- When you park your car, close the windows, lock the doors and take the key with you.
- If you must leave a key with a parking attendant, leave only your vehicle's ignition key.
- Install and use anti-theft devices, whether an alarm or a protective device like a club or a collar. Be sure to activate the device every time you leave your vehicle.
- Park only in well-lighted areas near other vehicles.
- Keep valuables out of sight, preferably locked away in the trunk.
- Don't hide a spare key in a magnetic key box; thieves know all the hiding places.
- At home, if possible, put your car away in a locked garage, or at least parked in the driveway.
- If you have two cars and one of them is easy to break into, then park it in your driveway so it's blocked by the other car.
- When you park your car, turn the front wheels to the left or right and put the emergency brake on. This locks the wheels, making it difficult for a thief to tow your car.

Protect Yourself While Using An Automated Teller Machine (ATM)

- Try to avoid using an ATM by yourself. Either take someone with you or only use an ATM when others are around.
- If possible, avoid using an ATM after dark. If you must, choose one that is well lighted and does not have tall bushes nearby.
- When you arrive at an ATM, look around. If you see anything that makes you uncomfortable or anyone who looks suspicious, do not stop. Either use an ATM at a different location or come back later. Notify the authorities.
- Have your access card and any other documents you need ready when you approach an ATM. While you are fumbling with a wallet or purse, you are easy game for a thief.
- If someone else is using the ATM when you arrive, avoid standing right behind them. Give them enough space to conduct their transaction in privacy.
- Even while using the ATM, stay alert to your surroundings. Look up and around every few seconds while transacting your business.
- Protect your Personal Identification Number (PIN). Do not enter your PIN if anyone else can see the screen. Do not use spouse, children, maiden or pet names for PIN number. Shield your PIN from onlookers by using your body.
- When your transaction is finished, be sure you have your card and your receipt, then leave immediately. Avoid counting or otherwise displaying large amounts of cash.
- As you leave, keep a look out. Be alert for anything or anyone who appears suspicious. If you think you are being followed, go to an area with a lot of people and call the police.

Protect Yourself in a Parking Garage

- If you must leave a key with a parking attendant, leave only your vehicle's ignition key. Do not leave anything attached to it with your name and address.
- Don't park next to a van's sliding door.
- Change from high heels to low flats or even sneakers when leaving work. They are better to run in.
- At night, leave your office or building in the company of others. Don't leave alone after dark. If possible, have someone from your building security escort you, or call for police assistance.
- Approach your vehicle with your keys already in your hand.
- Look around your vehicle for any suspicious activity. If you see someone loitering around your vehicle, walk past until they leave.
- Do a quick scan of your vehicle's interior before unlocking the door. Be sure to look in the back seat.
- Keep your doors locked and your windows shut.
- Be suspicious of anyone approaching your vehicle, whether passing out leaflets or asking for donations. Always leave the car windows up.

Protect Yourself While Shopping

- Avoid shopping alone. Try to shop with a friend or relative.
- Park your vehicle in a well-lighted area. Put radar detectors and cellular telephones out of sight.
- Know your surroundings. Keep an eye on the people in front of as well as behind you.
- Carry your purse close to your body. Don't swing it loosely. Don't flash large amounts of cash.
- Walk with confidence. Avoid talking to strangers.
- Approach your vehicle with your keys already in your hand.
- Try not to carry too many packages. Place all packages out of sight in your vehicle, preferably in the trunk.
- Keep your vehicle doors locked and your windows shut.
- If you see anything suspicious or if something just doesn't feel right, leave immediately and contact security or the police.

Protect Yourself While Walking at Night

- Avoid walking or running alone at night. Instead go walking or jogging with a friend.
- Don't use headphones while walking, driving or jogging.
- Always walk in well-lighted areas.
- Avoid the use of short cuts.
- After dark, keep away from large bushes or doorways where someone could be lurking.
- Always stay near the curb.
- If someone in a vehicle stops and asks for directions, answer from a distance. Do not approach the vehicle.
- If followed, go immediately to an area with lights and people. If needed, turn around and walk in the opposite direction, your follower will also have to reverse directions.
- Do not display cash openly, especially when leaving an ATM.

How to Safeguard Your Children

- Teach them to never talk to strangers.
- Teach them never to ride their bikes alone; always ride with a buddy and always wear their helmet.
- Teach them to never play in the street.
- Teach them to always look both ways and watch for cars before entering or crossing the street.
- Establish neighborhood boundaries in which they may play.
- Teach them to never open the door to a stranger when home alone.
- Teach them that, when answering the telephone, never give out any personal information or let the person who calls know if they are alone.
- Teach them to be sure to let their parents know exactly where they will be and for how long, and to always call and let them know if they decide to go somewhere else.
- If they should see a gun, teach them to stop, don't touch, call an adult.

- Teach them to never get into a car with someone they don't know.
- If they feel threatened, teach them to run away as fast as they can.
- Develop a secret password that must be used if someone unfamiliar is to pick them up from school or play.
- If they come home and something about their house doesn't look right, teach them to go immediately to a neighbor's for help.
- Teach them that 911 should be used only in emergencies.
- Teach your child to walk confidently and stay alert to where they are and what is going on around them.
- Teach your child to notice and report, strangers who hang around playgrounds, public restrooms and empty buildings.
- Teach your children that most people are good, but bad people do exist.
- Children should understand that appearance or demeanor cannot determine whether a person is good or bad. People are not always as they seem.
- Teach your children they have the right to say "NO" to anyone, even to an adult they know, who touches them inappropriately. They must yell "NO" Get away", and tell a grownup safety friend.
- Make it your business to know your child's friends and their parents.
- Review possible abduction "scenarios" with your child on a regular basis.
- Avoid shortcuts through empty parks, fields, laneways, alleys or behind buildings.
- Avoid clothing with your child's name on it.
- Always accompany young children to the bathroom in public places.
- Review with your child what an emergency is and the types of emergencies that can occur.
- Keep an up to date photograph of your child with a current record of height, weight and any prominent scars or marks and location on the body. Also keep a strand of the child's hair or fingernail clipping for DNA testing and identification purposes.
- "Latch Key" children should be trained on what to do in case of an emergency (ie. fire, serious injury, stranger trying to enter home, etc.). The most important thing is to not panic.
- Teach children to yell the word "fire" over and over if someone is trying to abduct them. The word "fire" is an attention getter and normally most people will stop what they are doing to see where the fire is.
- Secure all firearms that are in the home. Use some type of gun safety lock and keep the weapon and ammunition stored separately when not being used.
- Your child must understand that grownups ask other grownups for help - not kids!
- If your child is being bullied at school, teach them to report it to a school official. Tell them that it is unacceptable to be threatened while at school.
- If your child walks to school, try to have them walk in a group with other children that they are familiar with. Also, instruct them to stay on a main sidewalk or route home. Tell them that some "shortcuts" may be dangerous.
- Monitor your child's activities on the Internet. Learn who they "chat" with and what they talk about. There are sexual predators who use the internet to attract their victims.
- When utilizing a babysitter, make sure that you leave specific emergency contact information so that you can be contacted in case of an emergency. Also, leave a list of any type of allergic or pre-existing medical conditions that your child might have.